

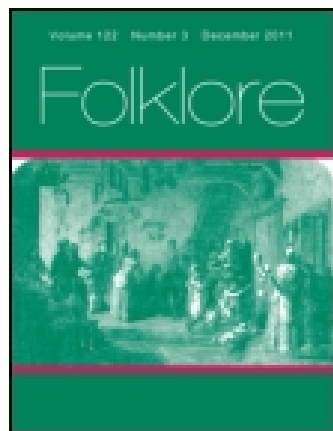
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Tree Worship in China

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COLLECTANEA.

TREE WORSHIP IN CHINA.

My friend the Rev. J. Hinds writes to me from Tongshan, North China, as follows:—

"Enclosed I send you a photograph of a tree which stands in the front of the District Magistrate's Court in Yung-Ping-Fu City, which may be of some little interest to you from the fact that worship is regularly paid to it. You will see the incense vessel at the bottom. The tree, when I saw it, was hung all round with inscriptions, such as "Fan ch'iu pi ying" (whoever entreats will certainly be answered). The tree is of the locust class, a fine spreading tree common in North China, called by the Chinese name Huaishu. The botanical name is *Sophora Japonica*. They say in Yung-Ping-Fu that every yamen has a similar tree, to which incense is offered. I have not, however, noticed it elsewhere, and our (native) preacher here, to whom I referred the matter, could not say."

Plate II. is a reproduction from the photograph in question. An incense-burner is smoking on the altar, in front of which a rectangular space is marked off by stones set in the ground. The information is scanty, but seems to imply true tree-worship. Very little evidence of this has yet been collected in China, although there are legends of a tree of life and a world-tree, the pine, cypress, and other trees, yield elixirs of life, and various trees are said to raise or drive away spirits.

A. R. WRIGHT.

PLATE II.



TREE AND ALTAR, YUNG-PING-FU, CHINA.

To face p. 190.